

44. *Shag Point Coal Mine, Palmerston*.—As this mine has occupied a good deal of time and attention, and been eventually closed, I shall, even at the risk of prolixity, report in detail as to my action during the past twelve months. In last year's report the circumstances relating to the stoppage of the submarine workings were alluded to; but there is now a correction to be made. The soundings and shore-line were taken from the company's plan, but when these came to be checked by a proper survey it was found that the cover overlying the submarine workings, instead of being 99ft. to 160ft., as stated, is 117½ft. to 195ft. The dams were put in, and, in order to allow the water to be kept at some distance below them, a syphon was arranged to carry the drainage water through these dams and down the shaft to the pumps. Pulsometers also were placed in the dip-workings. The submarine area continued to fill very gradually with drainage water. On the 24th December, 1883, I found a ~~creep~~ had set in in the old level (upper seam), which was closing up rapidly. During Mr. Twining's survey, in February, 1883, there was a heavy weight on this portion of the mine, and since then a good deal of surrounding coal had been taken out. On the 1st February the water was rising more rapidly, and some places were lost. On the 8th February Mr. Williams wrote that he wanted to put a hole in the small dam for the purpose of inserting an 18in. pipe, and through it rescuing some pipes, &c., and he would come and see me on the 11th, if wished. I telegraphed on the 9th that it would be preferable for me to go to Shag Point and discuss the matter on the ground. On the same date Mr. Williams replied, "Too late now to open dam: water too high." Arrived at the colliery on the 11th. A number of miners met me and stated that they were afraid to go down the shaft, as salt water was pouring down from the upper seam, and fissures had appeared on the beach, indicating an incursion of the sea. On meeting Messrs. Rich and Williams we had a long consultation as to what should be done. The dams, I found, were not holding. As might have been expected, the woodwork was passing water; but, in addition to this, a considerable stream was coming in between the masonry and the measures. Though the timber would take up, it was obviously impossible for this to do so. After considering the matter in all its bearings, there appeared no course but to close the mine altogether. In this opinion Messrs. Rich and Williams appeared to agree with me perfectly: they had no other course to suggest, and had there been the slightest apparent disposition to continue working I should have at once given notice under section 19 of "The Regulation of Mines Act, 1874." As it was, I wrote the necessary notice at the colliery on the 11th instant and handed it to Mr. Williams. At the present time the mine is full of water to sea level, and Mr. Williams tells me that the ebb and flow of the tide are distinctly perceptible, but to a very small extent. On the 5th March and 4th April I examined—on the latter occasion in company with Professor Ulrich, F.G.S.—the fissures on the beach. These are very interesting, and are evidently occasioned by the subsidence of the submarine strata. The unfortunate termination to this matter has caused me considerable regret. During the time that negotiations were proceeding I spared neither time nor trouble, and my endeavours, on the one hand, not to risk men's lives, and, on the other hand, not to damage property unnecessarily, occasioned me great anxiety. I trust that the happy medium was arrived at. I have to thank Mr. T. Evans, F.G.S., Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Mines for the Midland District of Great Britain, and Mr. G. Gilpin, A.M., F.G.S., Government Inspector of Mines for Nova Scotia, both of whom have been good enough to supply me with details of submarine mining. To treat now of the general condition of the mine during the year: In last year's report I had to complain of the ventilation, and this year these complaints culminated in a prosecution, the particulars of which are given below. From January, 1881, to the 2nd June, 1883, thirty months, I have records of having written to Mr. Williams four times, spoken to him nine times, and to the underviewer three, about defective ventilation. On seven other occasions it was noted as insufficient, but I have no record of having mentioned it; still, it is practically certain that it was mentioned. This will show that no undue haste was made in laying an information. On the 13th June, 1883, some of the miners told me that "the day previous it had not been fit for a person to be in." The accompanying plan shows the method of working; the notes give particulars of quantities, &c., on the 15th: on that date one man said, "sometimes you cannot breathe." According to the decision given by the Resident Magistrate in the case brought against the company for defective ventilation, any place where the temperature does not exceed 80° Fahr., and the men are not absolutely asphyxiated, is properly ventilated.

45. *Hill's Creek*; 46. *Idaburn*; 47. *Dunsmuir's*, and 48. *Cambrion's*.—Lignite mines. Are all open-work, and have been recently visited.

49. *Kyeburn Colliery, Kyeburn*.—Inspected the 26th March, 1884. This is a new mine. On the south side of the hill, a drive has been made in bad ground, and moderately timbered. Place in good order; but Mr. McCready does not observe the Act.

50. *Perseverance Coal Mine, Kyeburn*.—26th March, 1884. Mine in good order. Act kept; report up to date; rules up, and air good. No fault to be found.

51. *Archer's Coal Mine, Kyeburn*.—26th March, 1884. A new mine, which has not proved anything very good. Act not introduced till my visit. The proprietor keeps an hotel, and I have cautioned him not to pay wages at it.

52. *Alexandra Coal Mine, Alexandra*.—19th March, 1884. Ladders vertical, and no platform in 50ft. The owner was away, and the one man employed had never heard of the Act. Mine in good order. Wrote to owner.

53. *Manuherikia Coal Mine, Alexandra*.—Is closed now.

54. *Excelsior Coal Mine, Cromwell*.—21st March, 1884. A new mine. Seam nearly vertical in the levels are some awkward "passes," which I asked the owner to protect.

55. *Bannockburn Coal Mine, Cromwell*.—21st March, 1884. This is a new mine, worked by an engine plane, and drained by a 15ft. water-wheel. The mine is in good order. Sent Act and rules.

56. *Kiwarau Coal Mine, Cromwell*.—21st March, 1884. Also a new mine. Act not observed. Manager (who worked the old Kawarau Mine, and is also owner here) says he kept the report for eighteen months, but as no one came to see it he gave it up. Air good, and mine in excellent order.